

REMARKS

Claims 4, 6, 8-10, 20, and 21 are pending in this application. Claims 4, 6, 8-10, and 20 are allowed. By this Amendment, claims 1-3, 11-19 and 22-37 are canceled and claim 21 is amended. No new matter is added by this Amendment.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representatives by Examiner Zhou in the August 14, 2006 telephone interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 4, 6, 8-10 and 20 are allowed, and that claim 21 would be allowable if amended to overcome the 35 U.S.C. §101 rejection.

II. Pending Claim 21 Defines Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 3 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being non-patentable subject matter. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 is herein canceled. Thus, the rejection of claim 3 is moot.

Claim 21 is directed to a "storage medium," which is described in the Specification of Applicants' invention as comprising "a flexible disk, CD-ROM, DVD, magneto-optical disk, IC card, ROM cartridge, punch card, *printed matter imprinted with symbols such as a bar code*, ...and various other storage media readable by a computer." (emphasis added). The Office Action alleges that the recited subject matter "printed matter imprinted with symbols such as a bar code" is non-functional descriptive material *per se* under MPEP 2106 IV. B. 1. (a), and therefore not patentable. Applicants respectfully disagree with this interpretation.

During the August 14, 2006 telephone interview, the Examiner maintained her assertion that claim 21 includes printed matter and is not patentable under 35 U.S.C. §101.

Accordingly, although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Patent Office, to expedite allowance of the application, Applicants herein amend claim 21 to replace "storage medium" with "memory device." Because "memory device" does not include "printed matter imprinted with symbols," this rejection is overcome.

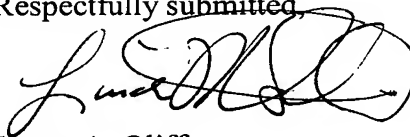
Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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